amar chitra katha

No. 107 Rs. 3.50

# PRADYUMNA

THE SON OF KRISHNA AND RUKMINI

Daksha, Shiva's father-in-law, had never given his ascetic son-in-law the respect due to him. Sati, Daksha's daughter, unable to bear the continued insults meted out to them, consumed her body in a fire generated by her own powers. The grief-stricken Shiva after punishing Daksha,forgave him and then entered his grove on the Himalayas to meditate.

Meanwhile, Tarakasura, an enemy of the Devas, invaded heaven. When the Devas went to Brahma for help he told them that Sati, reborn as Parvati, the daughter of Himavan, was destined to marry Shiva. The son born of Shiva would lead them to victory over the evil Asura. Impatient to win back his kingdom, Indra, King of the Devas, sent Kama,the God of love,with Rati,his wife,to awake Shiva to the charms of Parvati. Kama succeeded. But an enraged Shiva burnt him to ashes with the fire of his wrath. How the bereft Rati was reunited with her beloved husband is retold in the story of Pradyumna who was Kama reborn.

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Editor: Anant Pai

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# PRADYUMNA

KAMA, THE GOD OF LOVE, DISTRACTED SHIVA WHILE HE WAS MEDITATING.

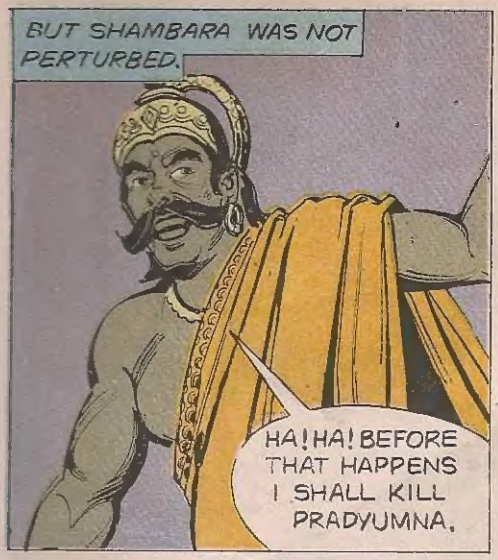
SHIVA WAS ENRAGED.

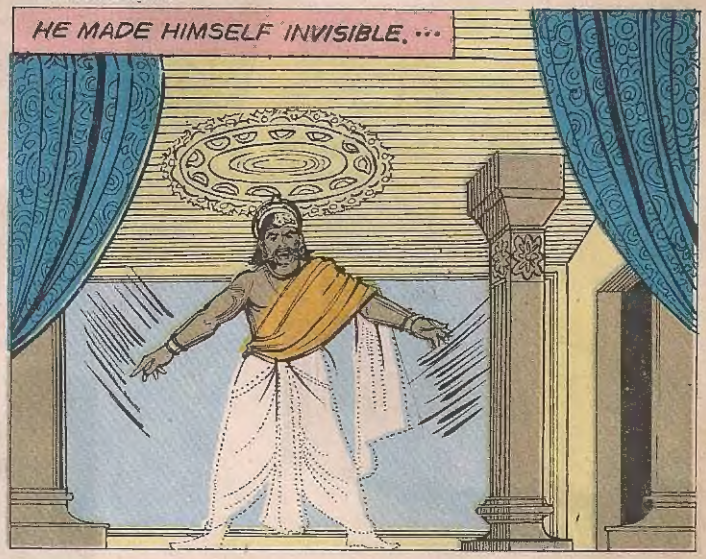
WHO HAS DARED TO DISTURB ME?

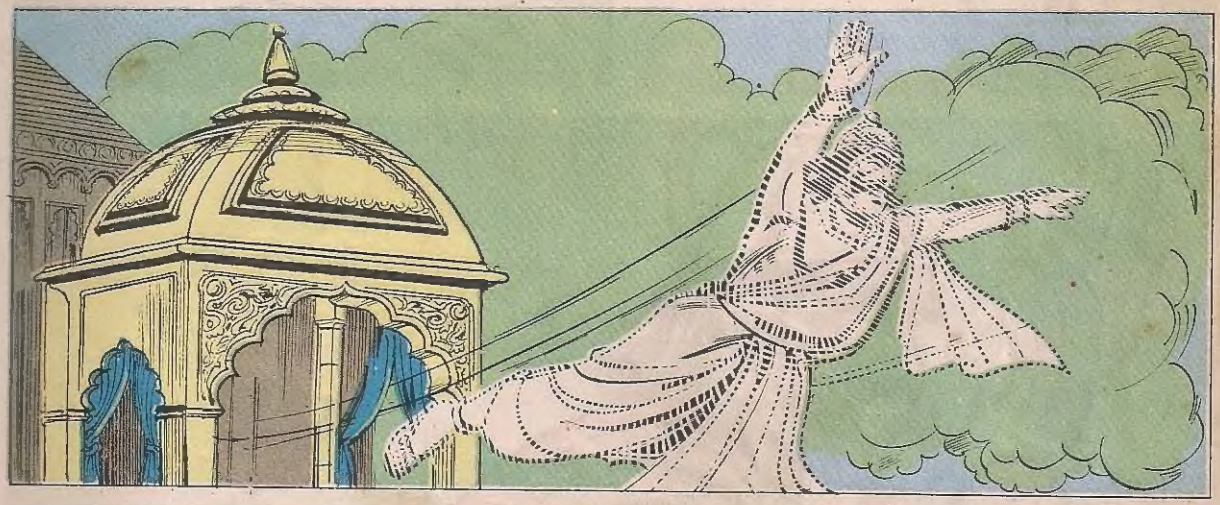
WHEN HE SAW THAT KAMA WAS THE CULPRIT, HE OPENED HIS THIRD EYE AND, TO THE HORROR OF RATI, KAMA'S WIFE, BURNT THAT GOD TO CINDERS.

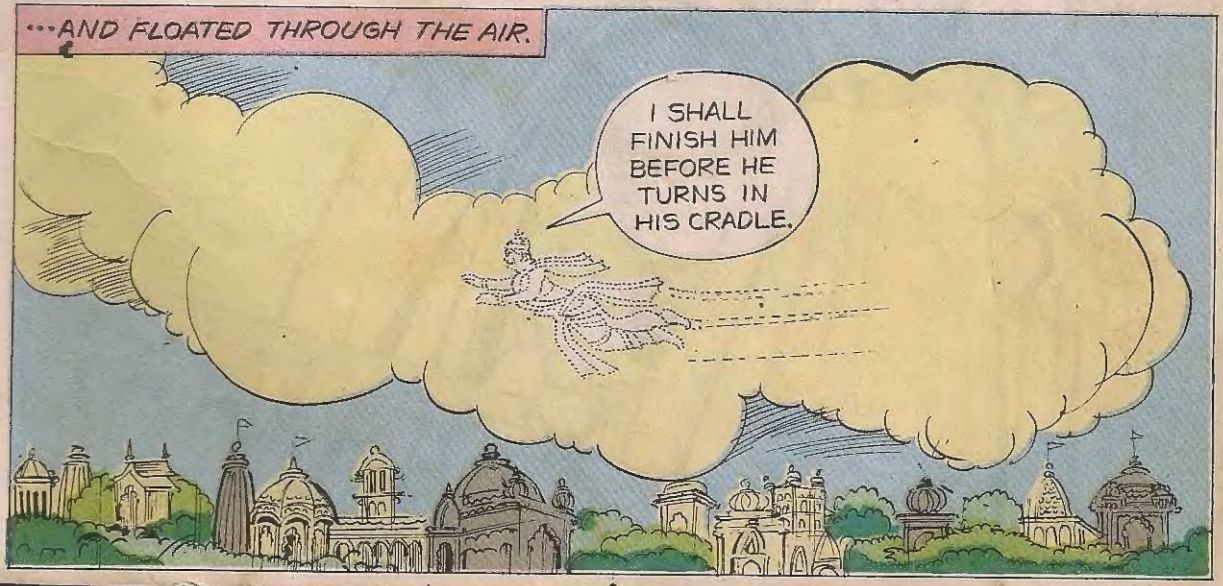
NO! NO!

BUT UNKNOWN TO RATI, KAMA WAS REBORN AS PRADYUMNA, THE ELDEST SON OF KRISHNA AND RUKMINI. THE PEOPLE OF DWARAKA REJOICED.
MY SON, YOU SHALL GROW UP TO BE A VALIANT HERO LIKE YOUR FATHER.
A WEEK LATER, AN EVIL ASURA CALLED SHAMBARA HAD A DREAM.
BEWARE, WICKED SHAMBARA. YOU SHALL BE KILLED BY PRADYUMNA, KRISHNA'S SON.


BUT SHAMBARA WAS NOT PERTURBED.
HA! HA! BEFORE THAT HAPPENS I SHALL KILL PRADYUMNA.


HE MADE HIMSELF INVISIBLE. ...

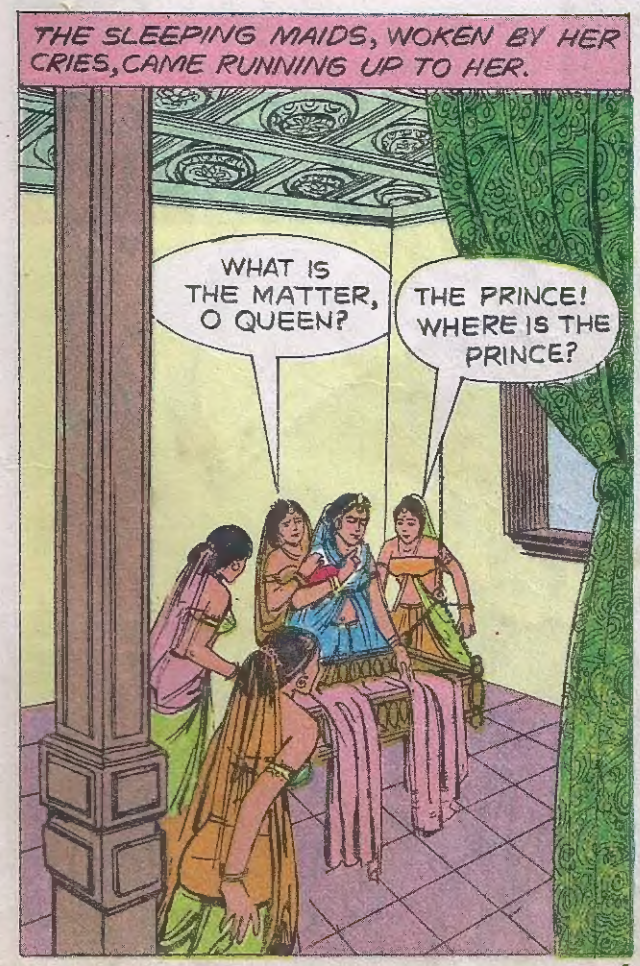



...AND FLOATED THROUGH THE AIR.
I SHALL FINISH HIM BEFORE HE TURNS IN HIS CRADLE.

HE SOON REACHED KRISHNA'S PALACE AT DWARAKA.

...O
SO YOU ARE THE BRAT DESTINED TO KILL THE GREAT SHAMBARA? HA! HA!

A LITTLE LATER, RUKMINI SUDDENLY WOKE UP.
MY SON! WHERE IS MY SON? WHERE IS PRADYUMNA?


THE SLEEPING MAIDS, WOKEN BY HER CRIES, CAME RUNNING UP TO HER.
WHAT IS THE MATTER, O QUEEN?
THE PRINCE! WHERE IS THE PRINCE?

RUKMINI WAS SO UPSET SHE COULD BARELY SPEAK.
HE-HE'S MISSING FROM HIS CRADLE!

THEY RAN TO KRISHNA.

THE PRINCE IS MISSING FROM HIS CRADLE.

DO NOT WORRY. I SHALL SEND OUT A SEARCH PARTY.

ANY NEWS OF THE PRINCE?

NONE WHATSO-EVER AND RUKMINI IS DISTRAUGHT WITH GRIEF.

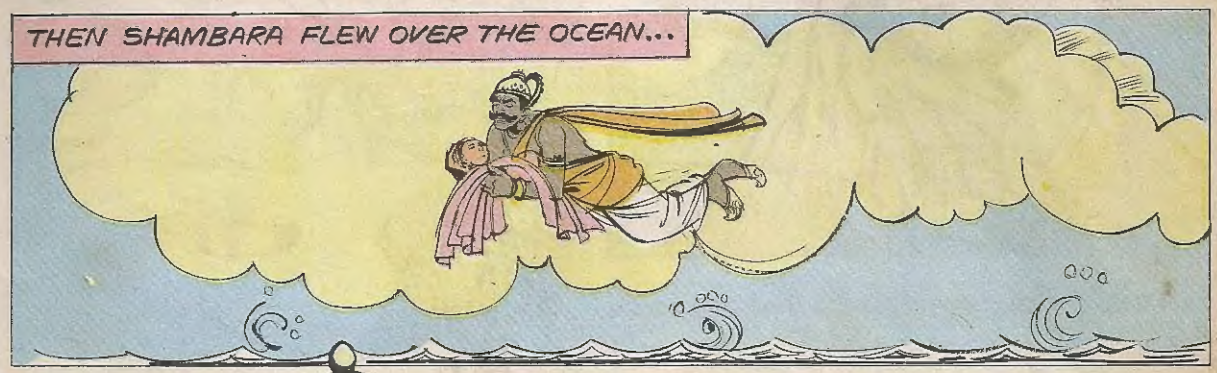
KRISHNA THE ALL-KNOWING REMAINED UNPERTURBED.

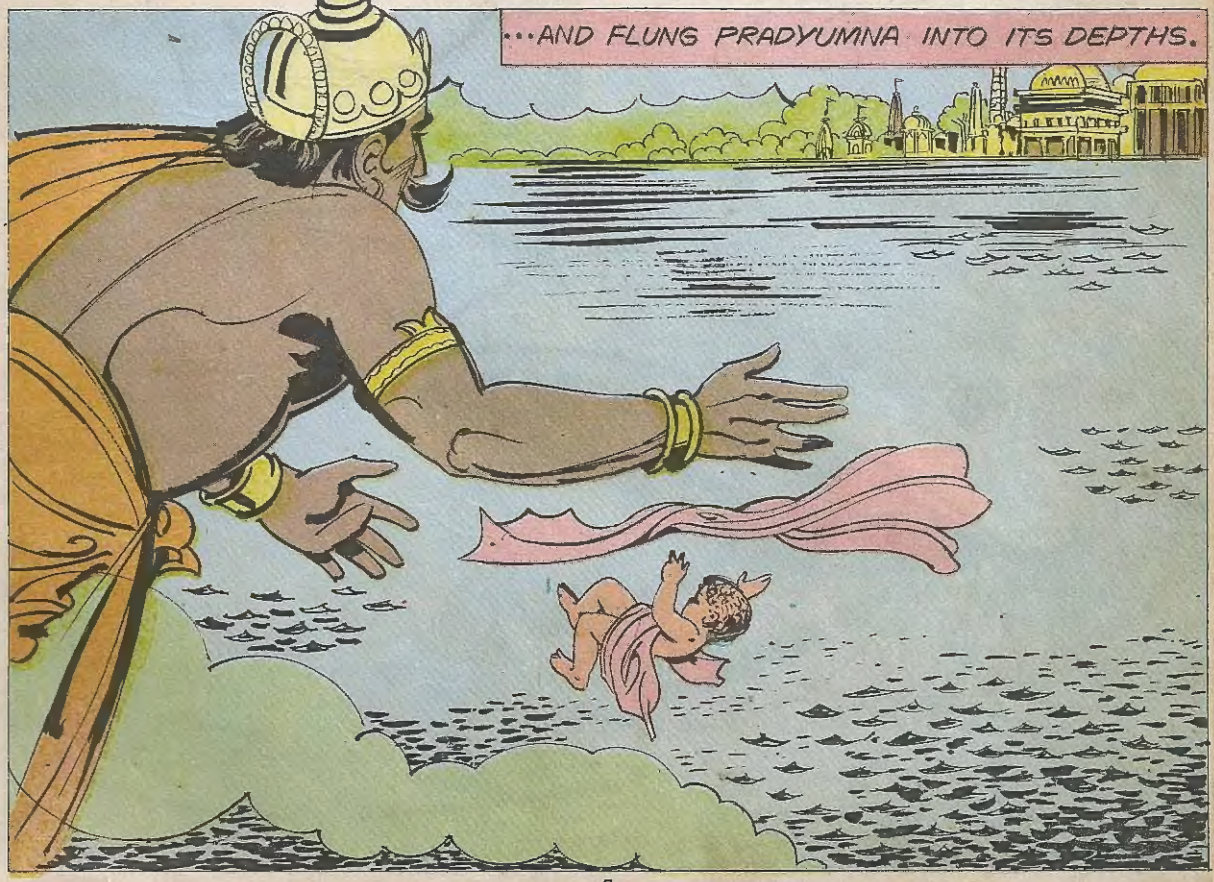
I MUST GO AND CONSOLE RUKMINI.

BY THEN, SHAMBARA WAS FAR, FAR AWAY FROM DWARAKA.

AHA! YOU WILL DESTROY ME, WON'T YOU? ALL RIGHT, YOU MAY, BUT...

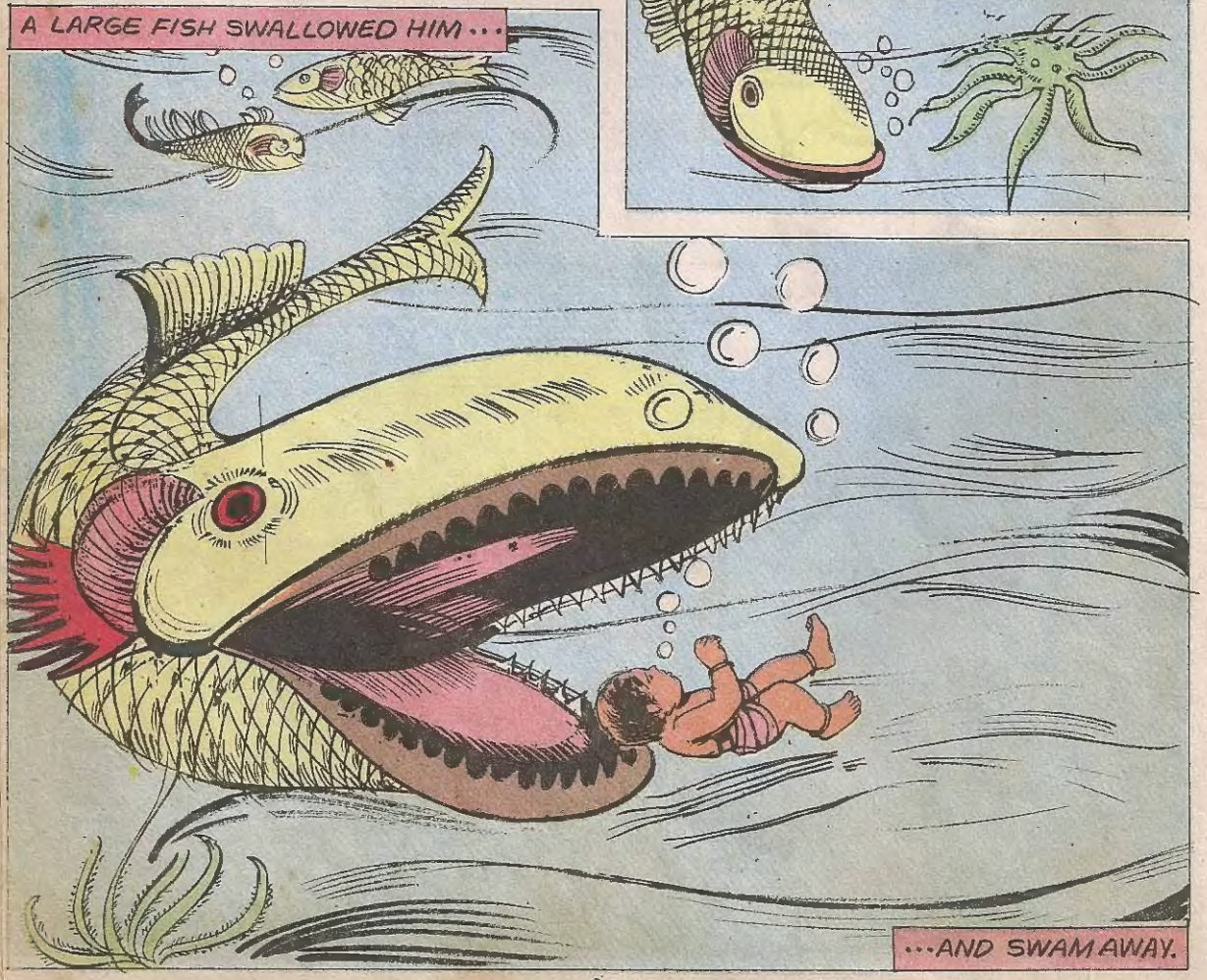
...YOU WILL HAVE TO REMAIN ALIVE TO DO SO.

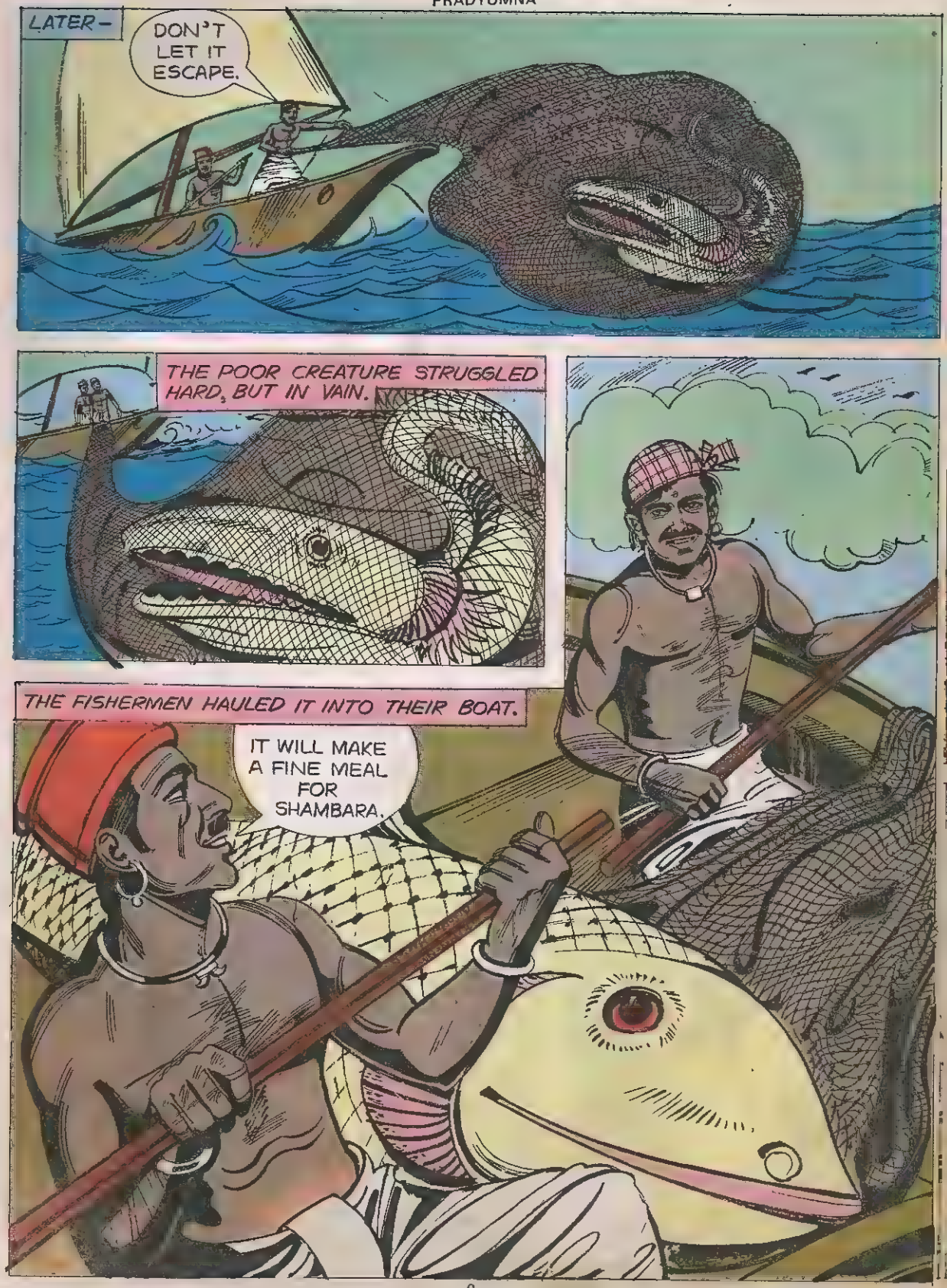

THEN SHAMBARA FLEW OVER THE OCEAN...

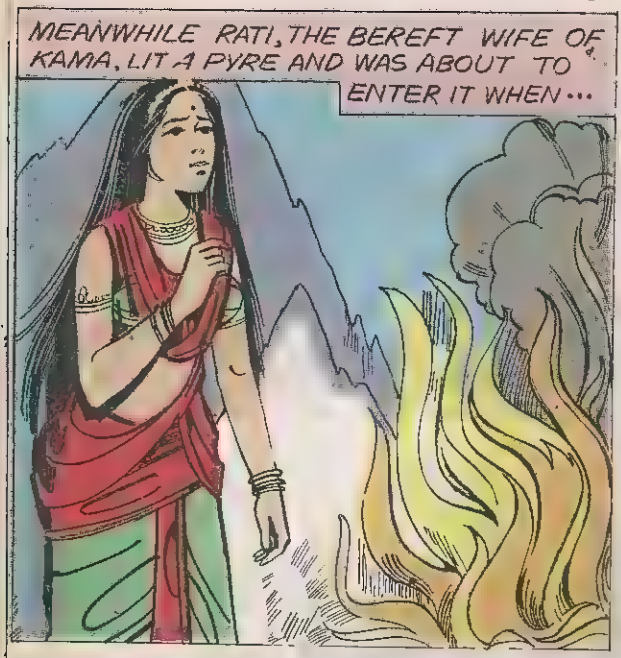

...AND FLUNG PRADYUMNA INTO ITS DEPTHS.

NOW I MAY RETURN AND SLEEP IN PEACE.

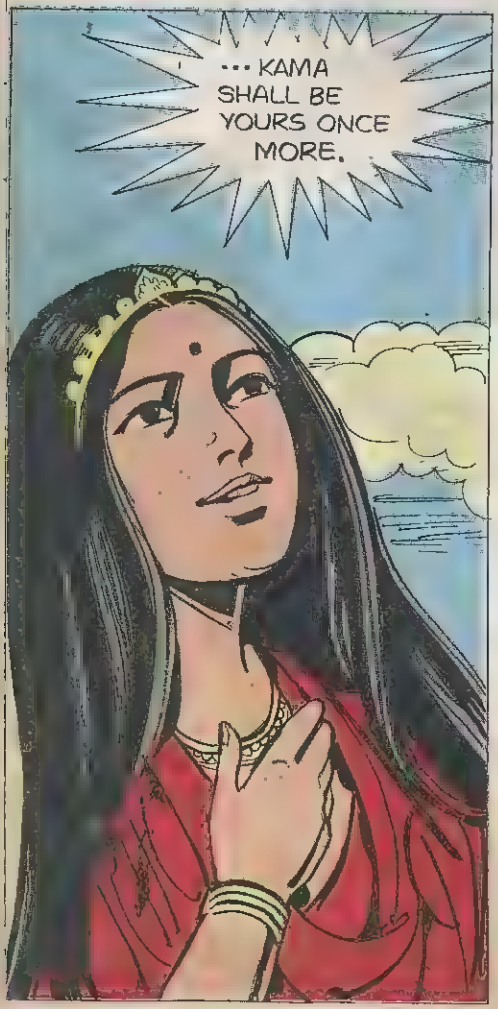
BUT PRADYUMNA DID NOT DIE.

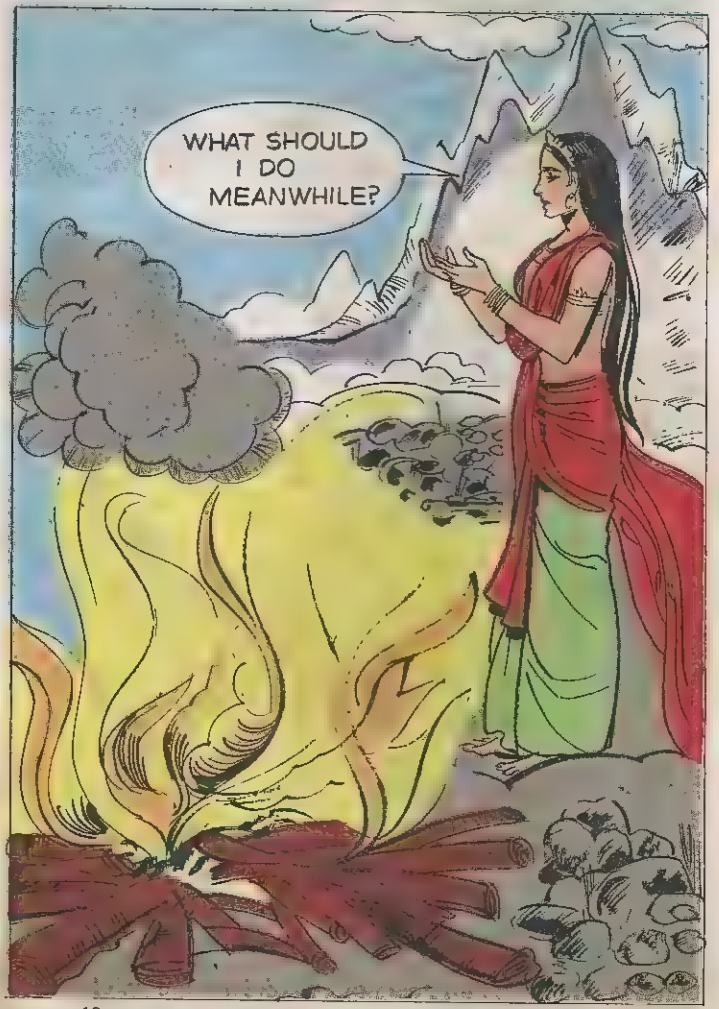

A LARGE FISH SWALLOWED HIM...
...AND SWAM AWAY.


LATER—
DON'T LET IT ESCAPE.
THE POOR CREATURE STRUGGLED HARD, BUT IN VAIN.
THE FISHERMEN HAULED IT INTO THEIR BOAT.
IT WILL MAKE A FINE MEAL FOR SHAMBARA.

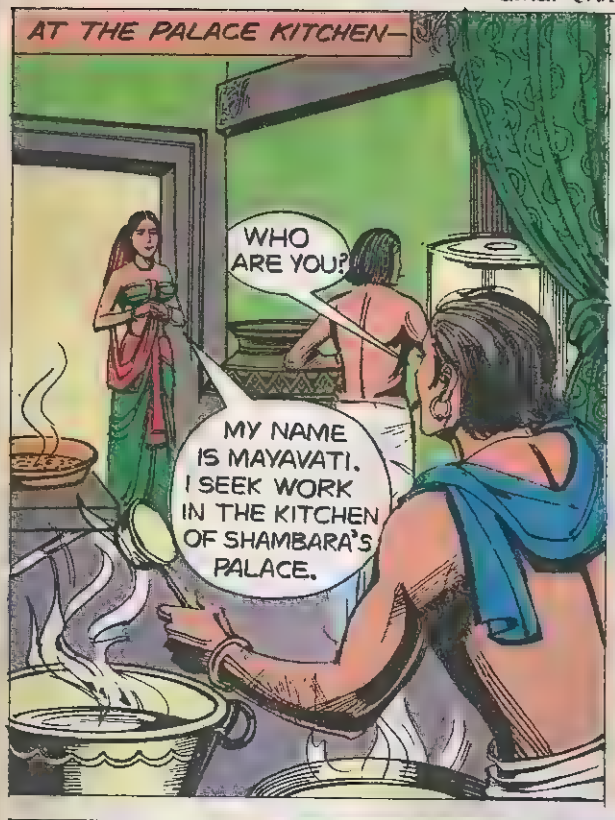

MEANWHILE RATI, THE BEREFT WIFE OF KAMA, LIT A PYRE AND WAS ABOUT TO ENTER IT WHEN ...

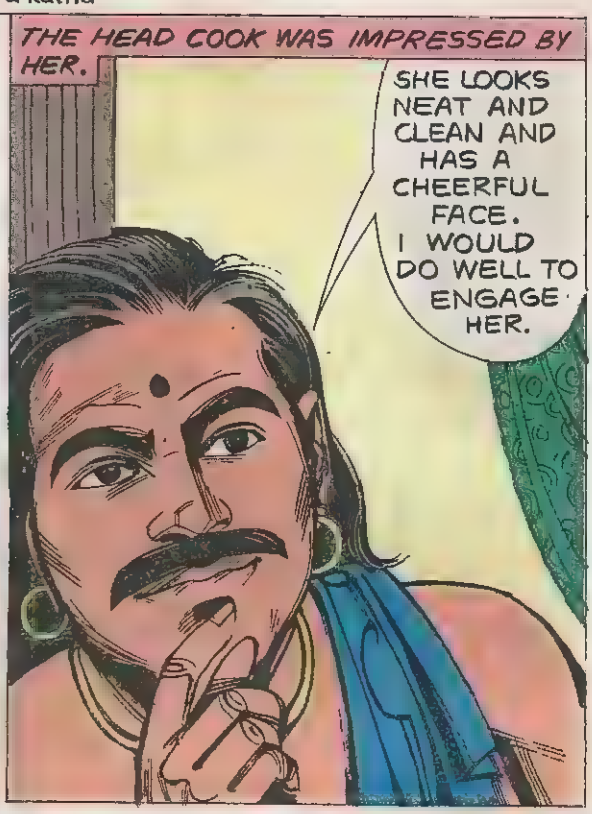
... A HEAVENLY VOICE STOPPED HER.
WAIT! ON THE DAY SHIVA GETS MARRIED...


... KAMA SHALL BE YOURS ONCE MORE.

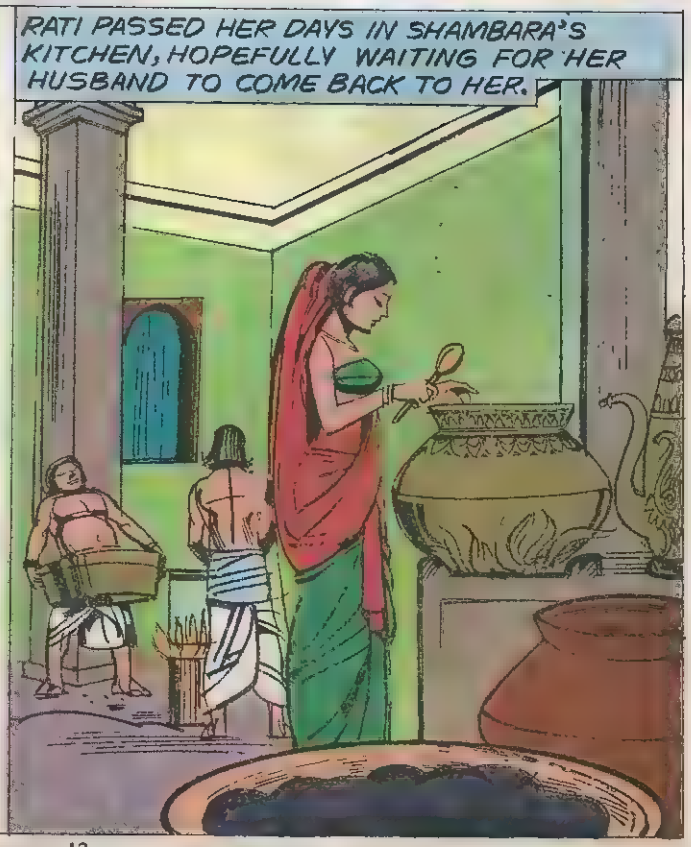

WHAT SHOULD I DO MEANWHILE?

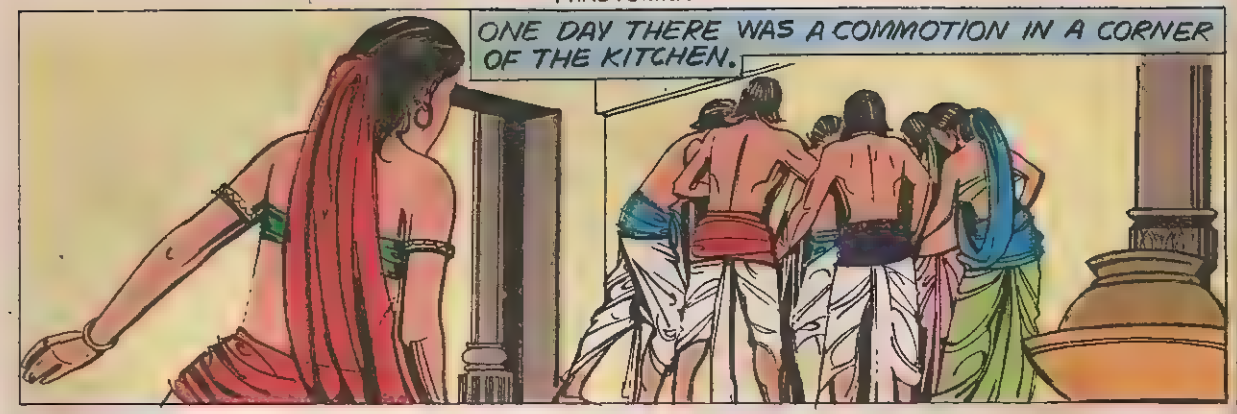
DISGUISE YOURSELF AS A MAID AND SEEK WORK IN THE KITCHEN OF THE ASURA, SHAMBARA.
SO RATI DISGUISED HERSELF AS A MAID AND...
...FLEW TOWARDS SHAMBARA'S PALACE.
I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT MY DEAR DEAD HUSBAND WILL BE MINE ONCE MORE.

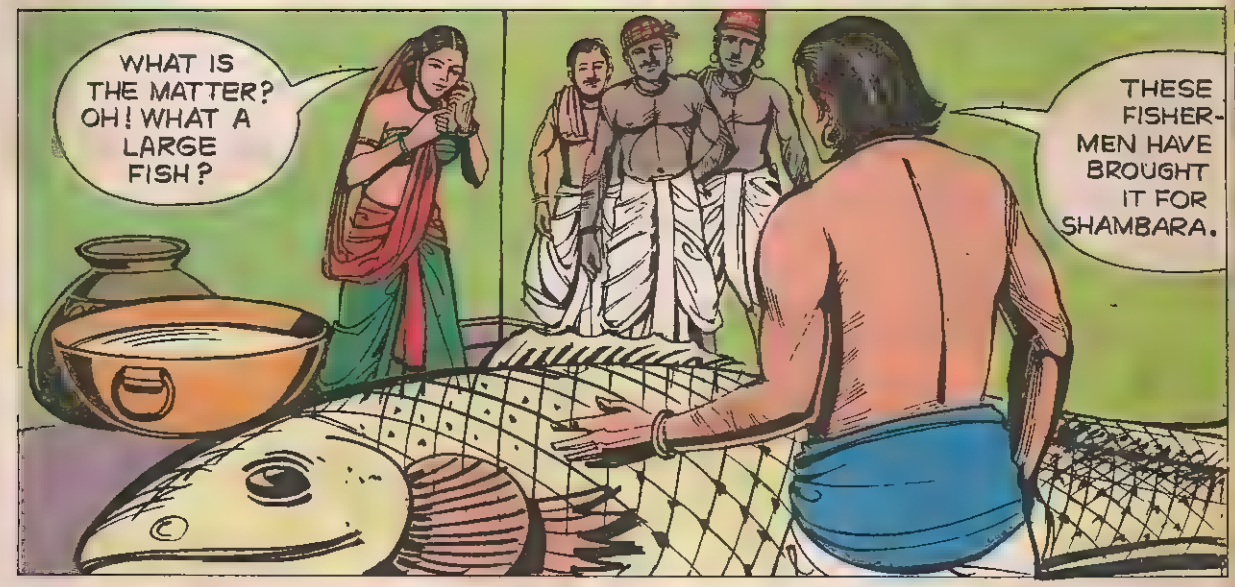

AT THE PALACE KITCHEN—
WHO ARE YOU?
MY NAME IS MAYAVATI. I SEEK WORK IN THE KITCHEN OF SHAMBARA'S PALACE.


THE HEAD COOK WAS IMPRESSED BY HER.
SHE LOOKS NEAT AND CLEAN AND HAS A CHEERFUL FACE. I WOULD DO WELL TO ENGAGE HER.

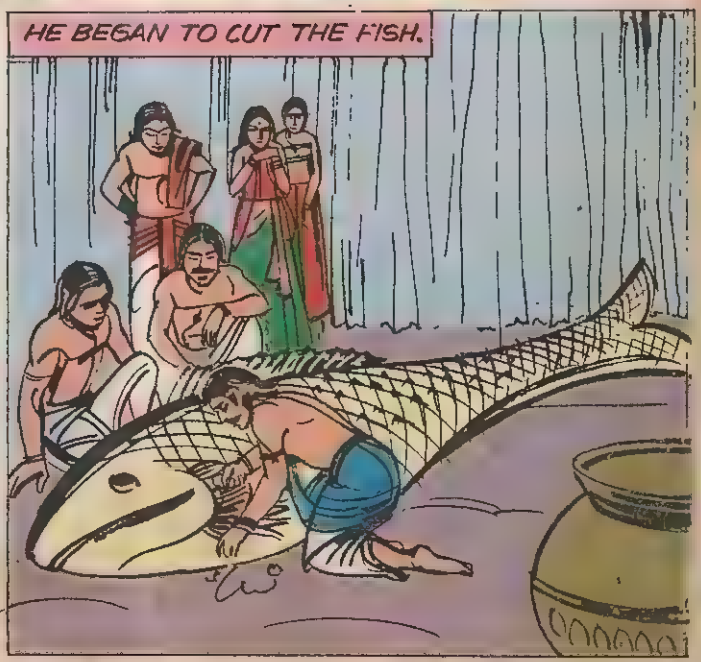
THE CHIEF MAID IS ILL. YOU MAY WORK IN HER PLACE.
I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU.


RATI PASSED HER DAYS IN SHAMBARA'S KITCHEN, HOPEFULLY WAITING FOR HER HUSBAND TO COME BACK TO HER.


ONE DAY THERE WAS A COMMOTION IN A CORNER OF THE KITCHEN.


WHAT IS THE MATTER? OH! WHAT A LARGE FISH?
THESE FISHER-MEN HAVE BROUGHT IT FOR SHAMBARA.

I SHALL COOK IT FOR HIS DINNER TONIGHT.


HE BEGAN TO CUT THE FISH.

WHEN HE SLIT OPEN THE STOMACH OF THE FISH, TO HIS ASTONISHMENT, A BEAUTIFUL BABY GURGLED AT HIM.

WH- WHAT IS THIS!

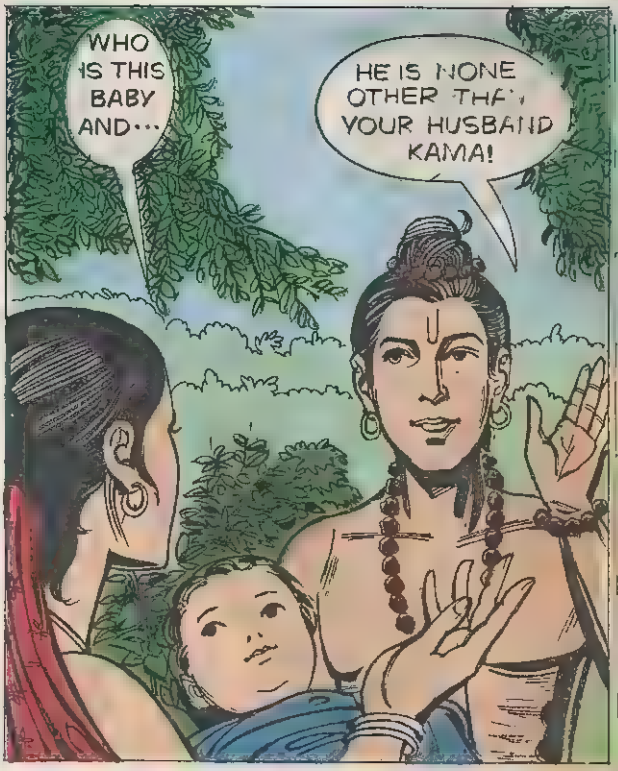
AH! WHAT A BEAUTIFUL BABY.

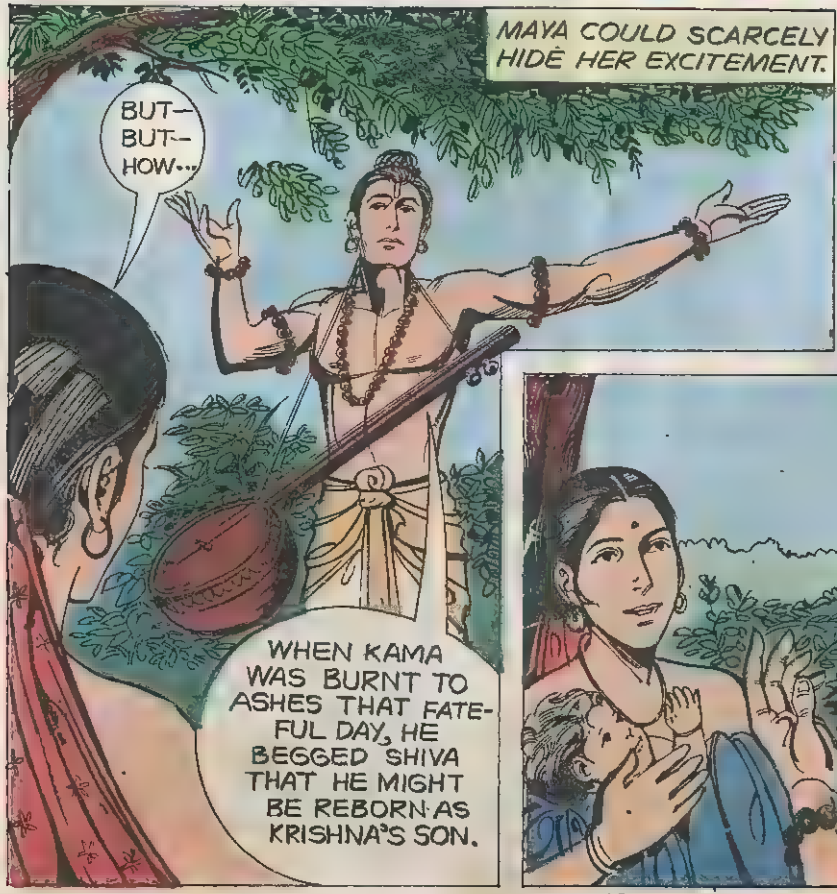
UTTERLY CONFOUNDED, HE TURNED TO MAYAVATI.

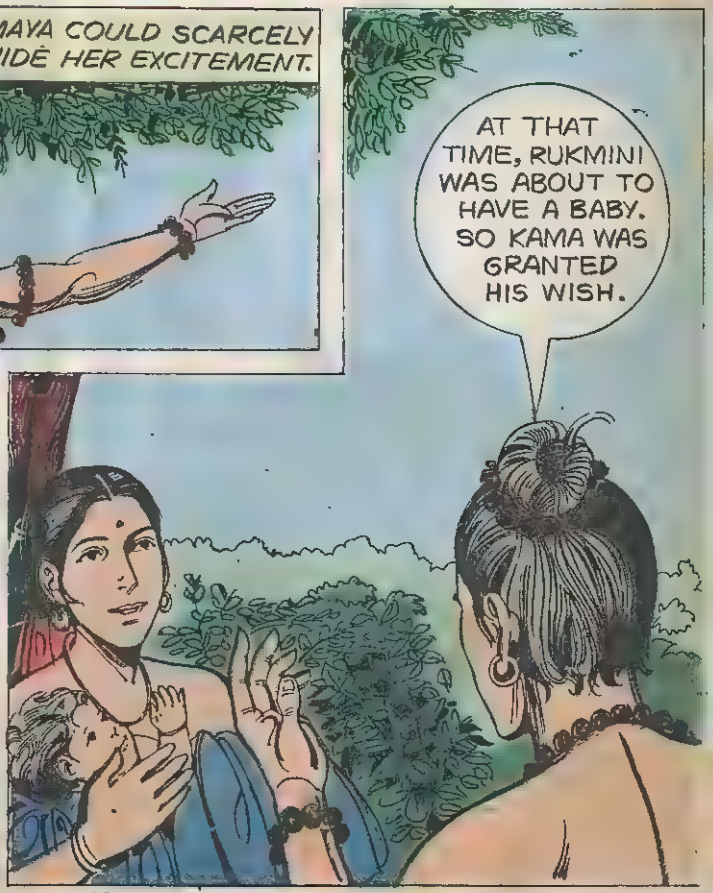
PLEASE TAKE HIM AND LOOK AFTER HIM. PERHAPS SOME DAY HIS PARENTS MIGHT COME FOR HIM.

POOR, POOR BABY. WHOSE CHILD ARE YOU? HOW DID YOU COME HERE? WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR YOU?

AS MAYAVATI WONDERED THUS, SAGE NARADA SUDDENLY APPEARED.
WELCOME, VENERABLE SAGE. YOU WILL CERTAINLY BE ABLE TO SATISFY MY CURIOSITY.

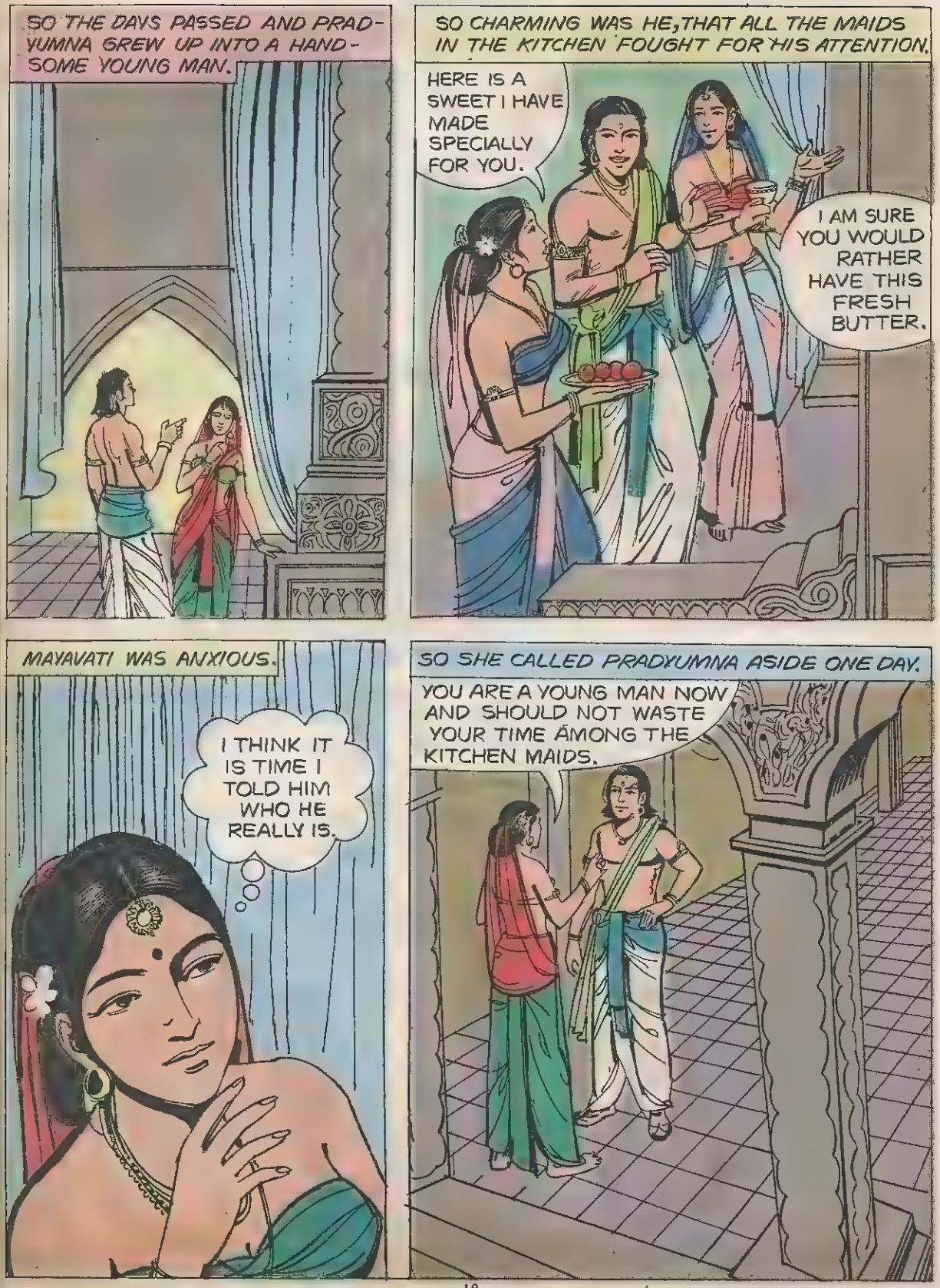

WHO IS THIS BABY AND...
HE IS NONE OTHER THAN YOUR HUSBAND KAMA!

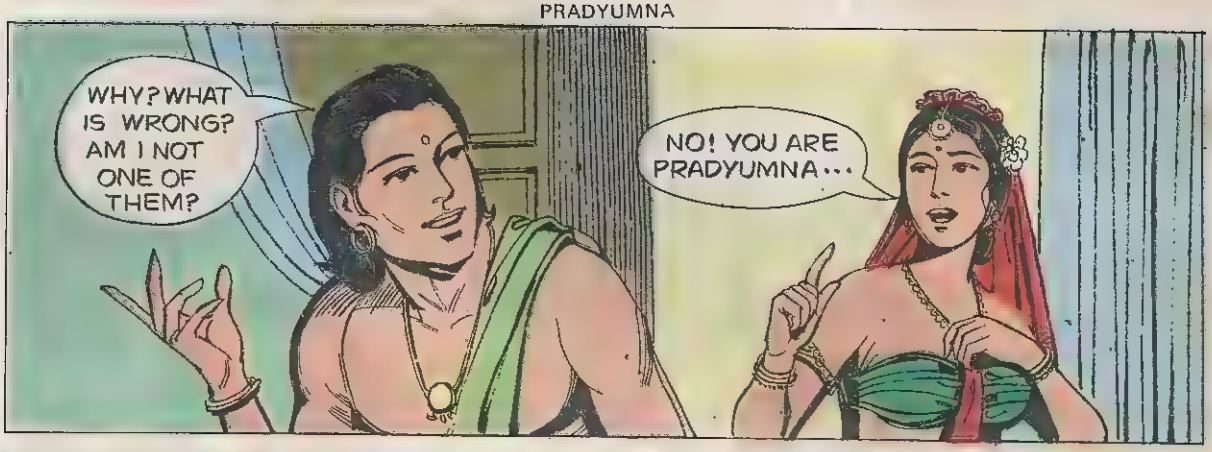

MAYA COULD SCARCELY HIDE HER EXCITEMENT.
BUT— BUT— HOW...
WHEN KAMA WAS BURNT TO ASHES THAT FATEFUL DAY, HE BEGGED SHIVA THAT HE MIGHT BE REBORN AS KRISHNA'S SON.


AT THAT TIME, RUKMINI WAS ABOUT TO HAVE A BABY. SO KAMA WAS GRANTED HIS WISH.

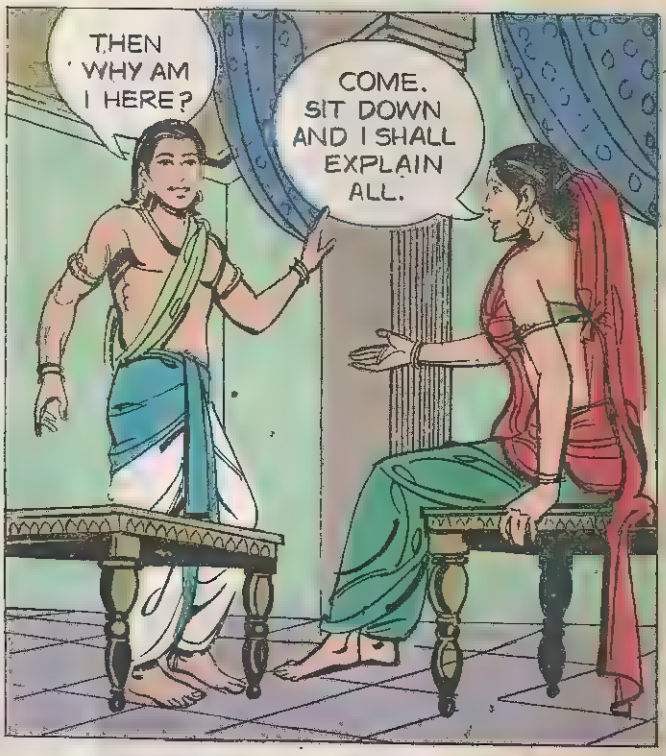
THE SON OF KRISHNA AND RUKMINI WAS DESTINED TO SLAY THE WICKED SHAMBARA.
PLEASE GO ON!
TO SAVE HIS OWN LIFE SHAMBARA STOLE THE BABY, PRADYUMNA, AND CRUELLY FLUNG HIM INTO THE ANGRY OCEAN.
BUT PRADYUMNA DID NOT DIE. HE WAS SWALLOWED BY A HUGE FISH AND... THE REST YOU KNOW.
LOOK AFTER THE CHILD AND REAR HIM WITH CARE. WHEN HE IS OF AGE LET HIM KNOW WHO HE IS AND ALL WILL END WELL.
AND NARADA WENT AWAY.

PRADYUMNA BECAME A FAVOURITE IN THE KITCHEN.
I SHALL FEED HIM HIS LUNCH TODAY.
NO, I SHALL. YOU GAVE HIM HIS MORNING MEAL.
HE SOON GREW INTO A MISCHIEVOUS BOY.
WHERE IS THE BUTTER I HAD SET ASIDE FOR SHAMBARA?
I DID NOT TOUCH IT. I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT IT.
AH! HE IS THE SON OF KRISHNA ALL RIGHT. THE SAME LOVE FOR BUTTER AND THE SAME LOOK OF INJURED INNOCENCE WHEN CAUGHT RED-HANDED!

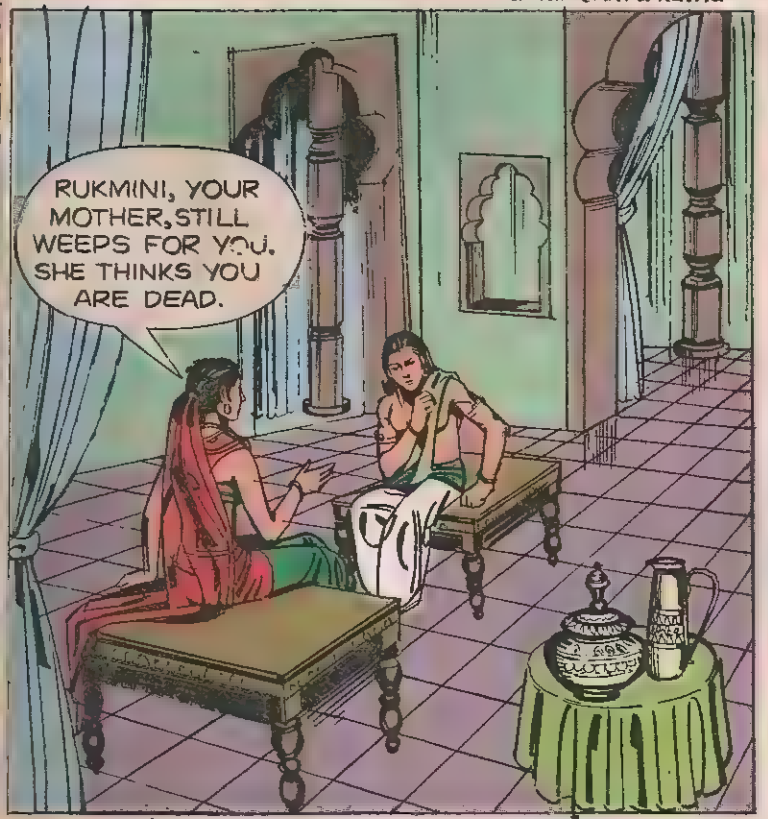

SO THE DAYS PASSED AND PRADYUMNA GREW UP INTO A HANDSOME YOUNG MAN.
SO CHARMING WAS HE, THAT ALL THE MAIDS IN THE KITCHEN FOUGHT FOR HIS ATTENTION.
HERE IS A SWEET I HAVE MADE SPECIALLY FOR YOU.
I AM SURE YOU WOULD RATHER HAVE THIS FRESH BUTTER.
MAYAVATI WAS ANXIOUS.
I THINK IT IS TIME I TOLD HIM WHO HE REALLY IS.
SO SHE CALLED PRADYUMNA ASIDE ONE DAY.
YOU ARE A YOUNG MAN NOW AND SHOULD NOT WASTE YOUR TIME AMONG THE KITCHEN MAIDS.

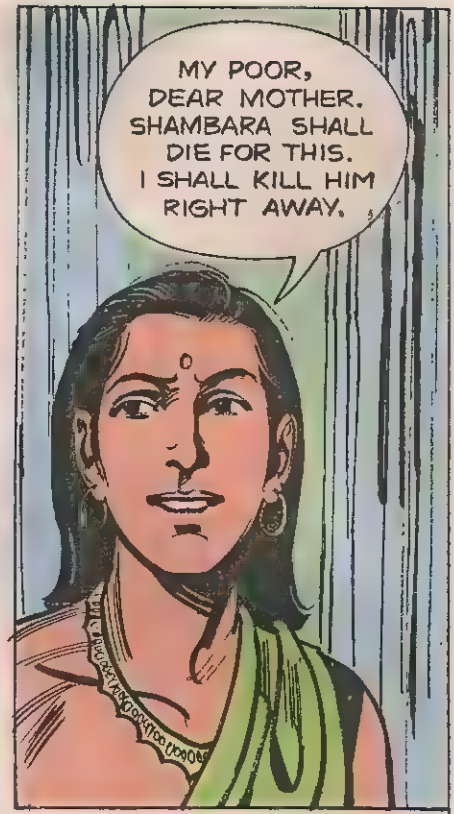

WHY? WHAT IS WRONG? AM I NOT ONE OF THEM?
NO! YOU ARE PRADYUMNA...

...THE SON OF RUKMINI AND KRISHNA.


THEN WHY AM I HERE?
COME. SIT DOWN AND I SHALL EXPLAIN ALL.

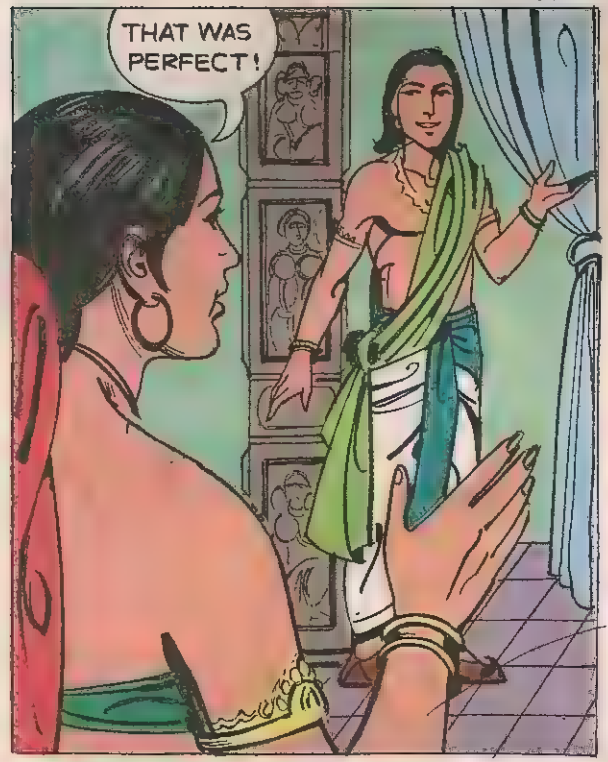
THEN MAYAVATI TOLD HIM ALL THAT HAD HAPPENED AFTER HIS BIRTH.
AND THAT IS HOW YOU CAME TO BE HERE!


RUKMINI, YOUR MOTHER, STILL WEEPS FOR YOU. SHE THINKS YOU ARE DEAD.

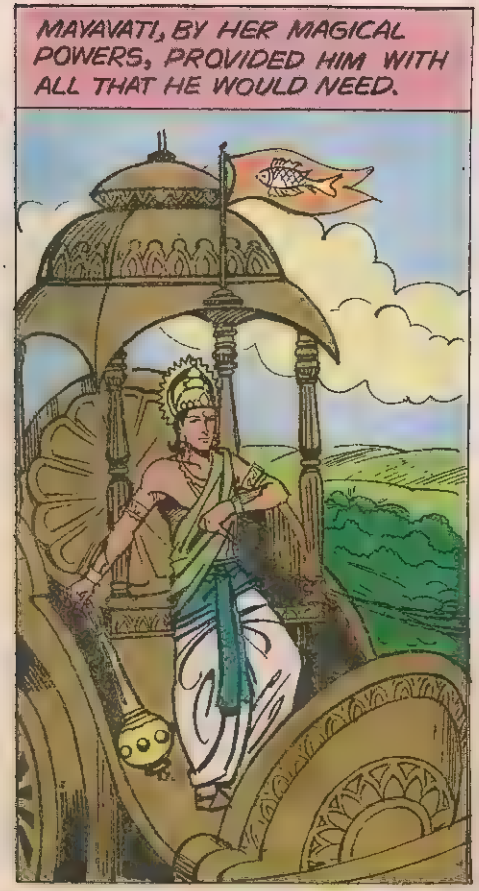

MY POOR, DEAR MOTHER. SHAMBARA SHALL DIE FOR THIS. I SHALL KILL HIM RIGHT AWAY.

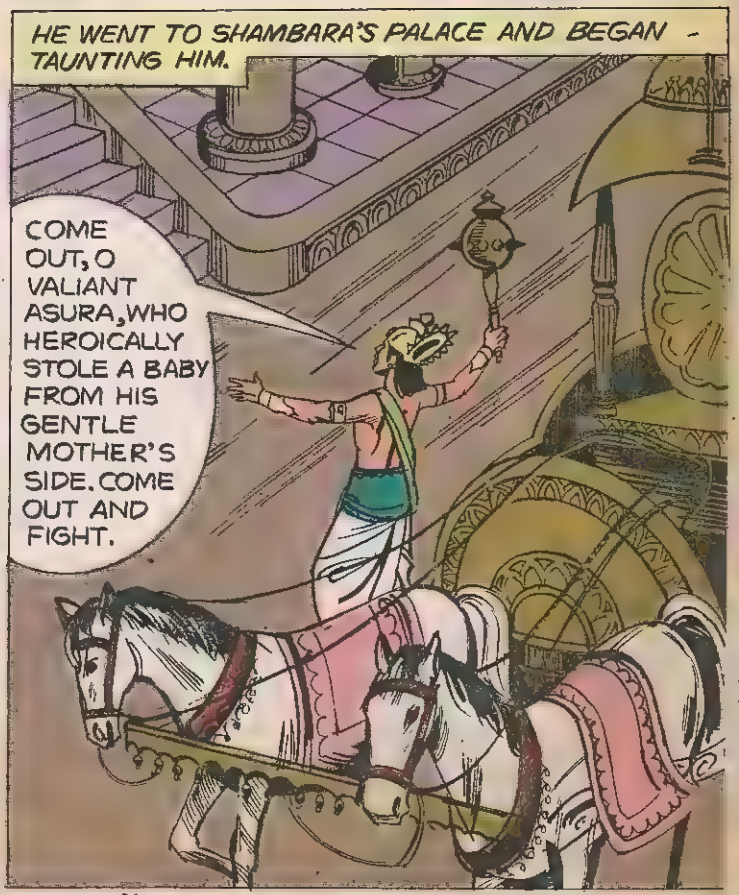
PATIENCE, PRADYUMNA. I SHALL TEACH YOU CERTAIN SPELLS THAT YOU WILL NEED TO COUNTER SHAMBARA'S MAGICAL POWERS.
AND MAYAVATI BEGAN TEACHING PRADYUMNA.

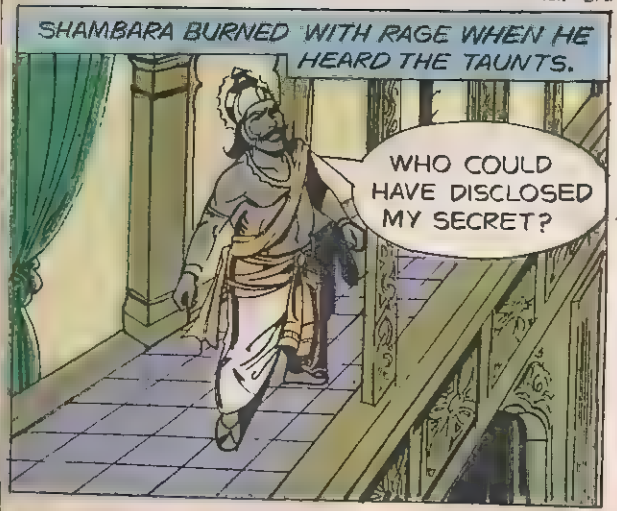
HE WAS A CLEVER PUPIL AND SOON MASTERED THE SPELLS.
TRY AND FIND ME BY USING THE CHARM TO MAKE THE INVISIBLE, VISIBLE.

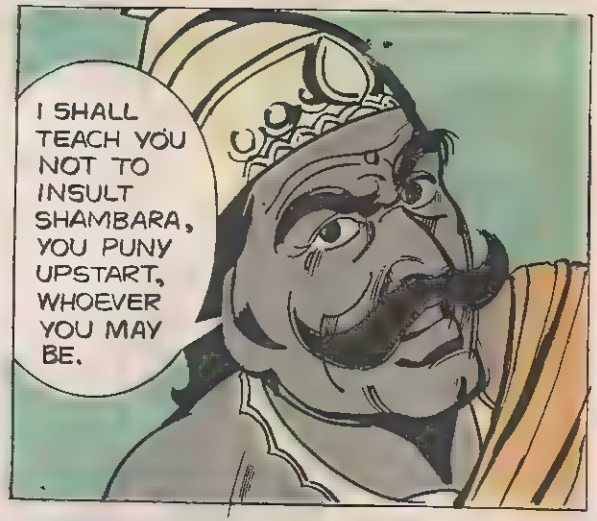

THAT WAS PERFECT!

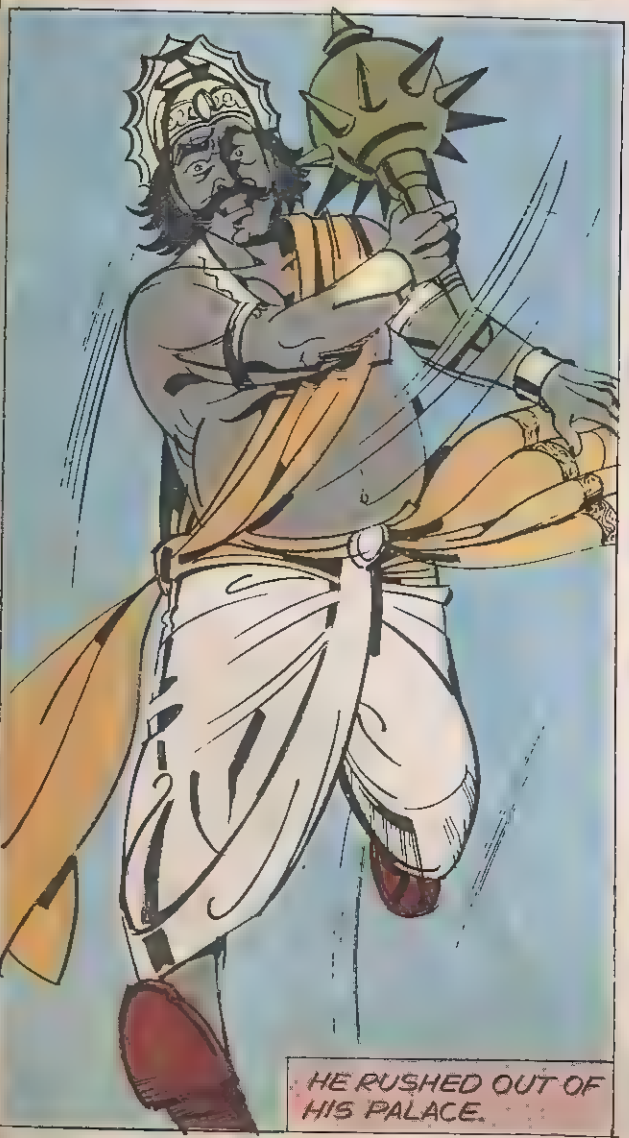
YOU ARE NOW READY TO CHALLENGE THE EVIL SHAMBARA. GO FIGHT AND KILL HIM.


MAYAVATI, BY HER MAGICAL POWERS, PROVIDED HIM WITH ALL THAT HE WOULD NEED.


HE WENT TO SHAMBARA'S PALACE AND BEGAN TAUNTING HIM.
COME OUT, O VALIANT ASURA, WHO HEROICALLY STOLE A BABY FROM HIS GENTLE MOTHER'S SIDE. COME OUT AND FIGHT.

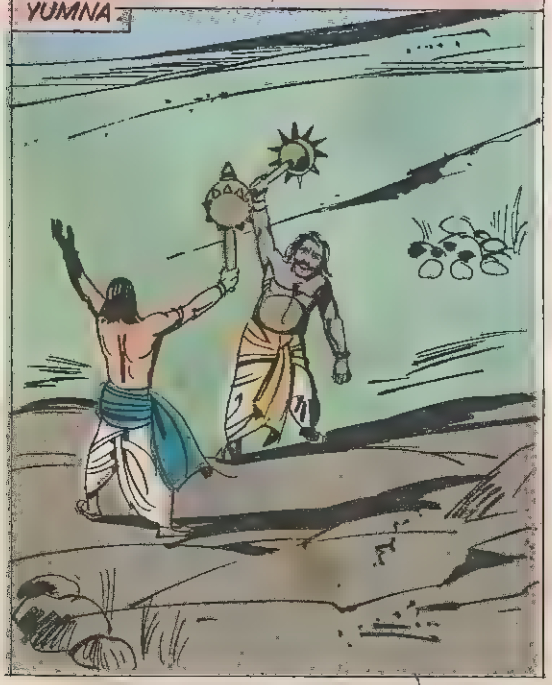

SHAMBARA BURNED WITH RAGE WHEN HE HEARD THE TAUNTS.
WHO COULD HAVE DISCLOSED MY SECRET?

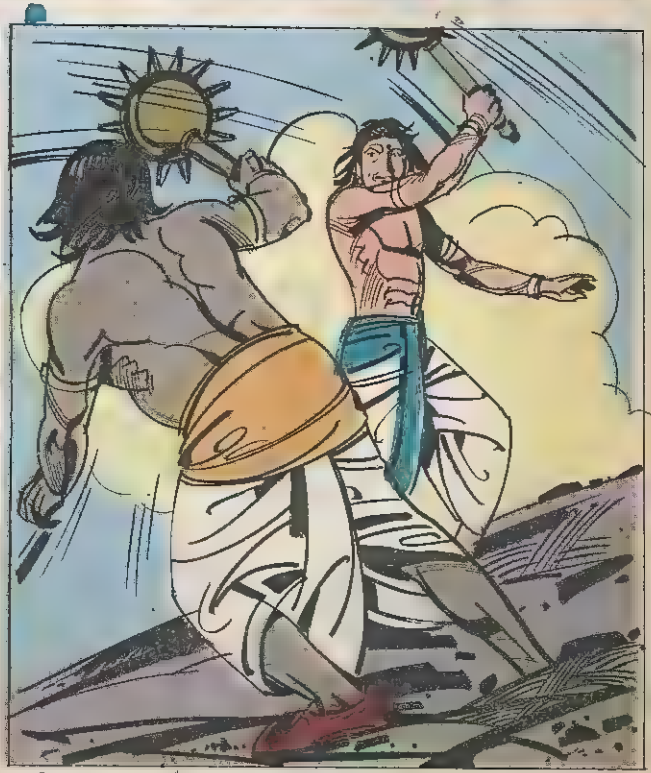

I SHALL TEACH YOU NOT TO INSULT SHAMBARA, YOU PUNY UPSTART, WHOEVER YOU MAY BE.


HE RUSHED OUT OF HIS PALACE.

A MIGHTY COMBAT ENSUED BETWEEN THE TWO.

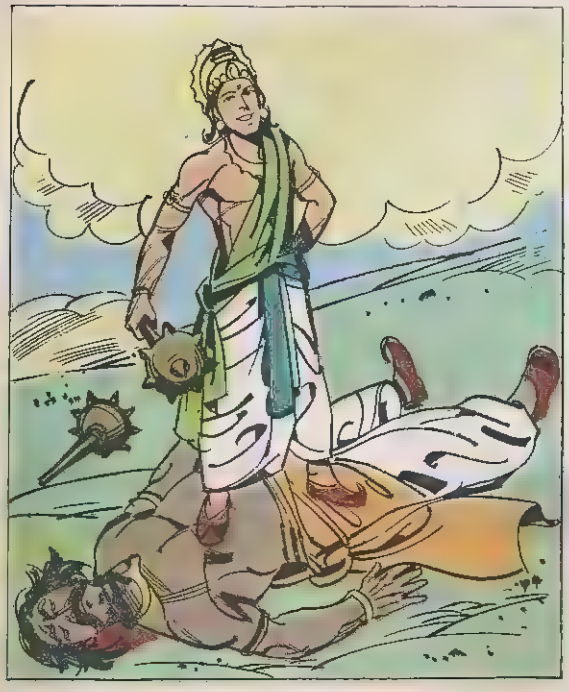
WITH A THUNDEROUS ROAR SHAMBARA SWUNG HIS MACE AT PRADYUMNA.





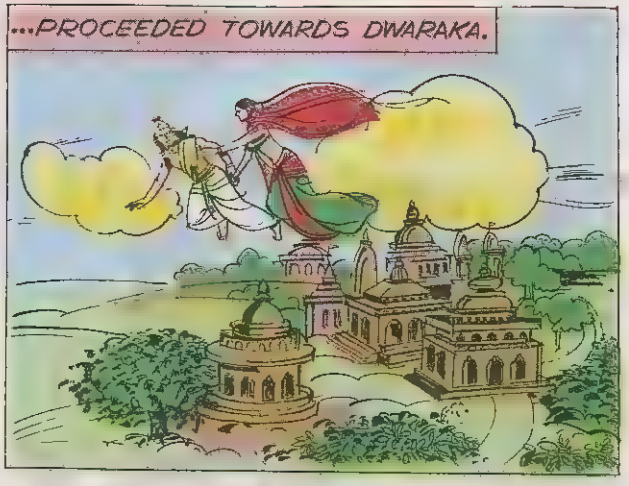
BUT PRADYUMNA WARDED OFF THE BLOW WITH HIS OWN MACE.
BUT RESORTING TO MAGIC, SHAMBARA SUDDENLY BECAME INVISIBLE.

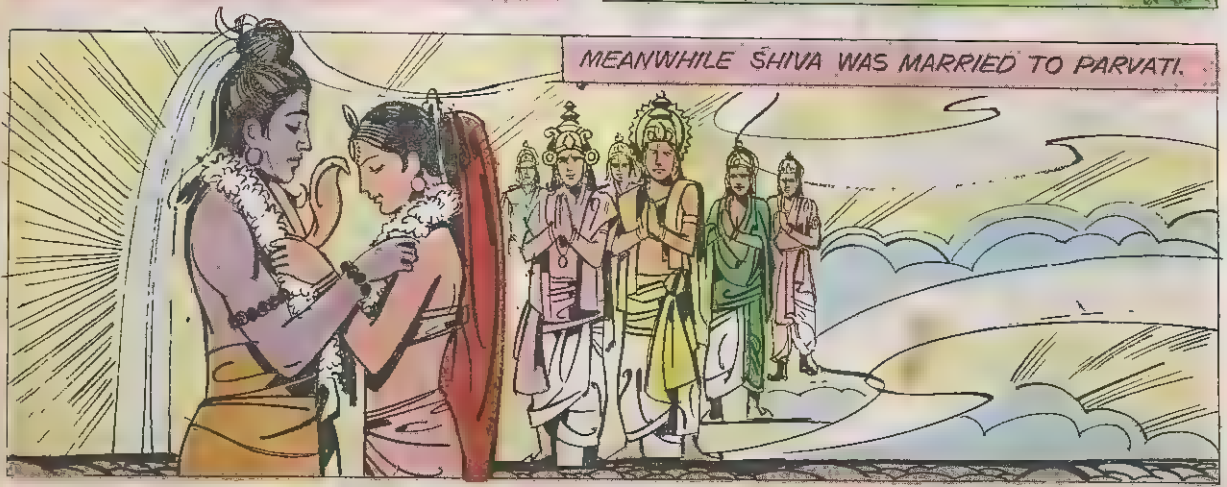
PRADYUMNA QUICKLY CAST THE SPELL THAT MAYAVATI HAD TAUGHT HIM...
...AND DRAWING HIS SWORD...
...SEVERED SHAMBARA'S HEAD FROM HIS BODY.



THEN HE WENT TO MAYAVATI.
I HAVE KILLED SHAMBARA.
COME THEN! LET US NOT WASTE TIME. MOTHER RUKMINI HAS SUFFERED ENOUGH.

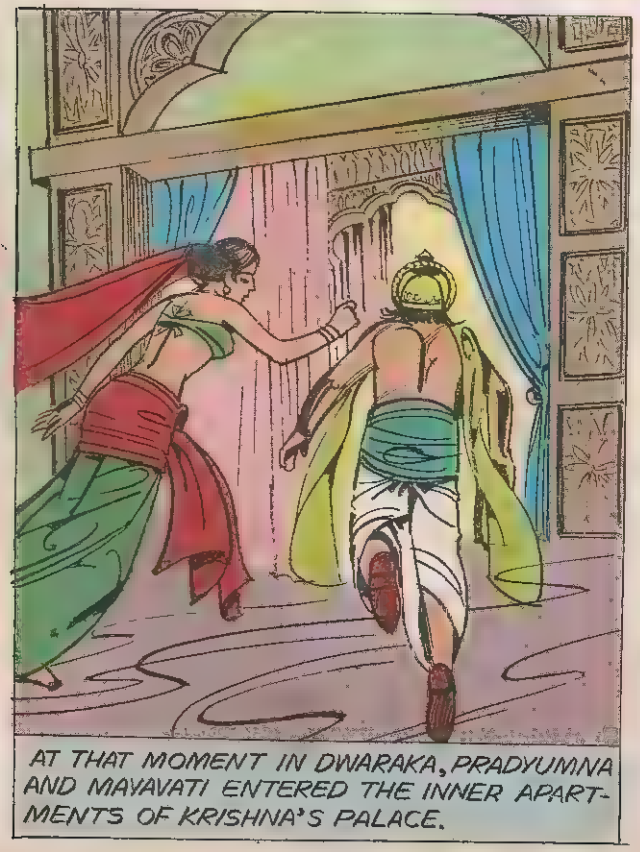
MAYAVATI TOOK PRADYUMNA BY THE HAND AND SOARING INTO THE SKY...


...PROCEEDED TOWARDS DWARAKA.


MEANWHILE SHIVA WAS MARRIED TO PARVATI.

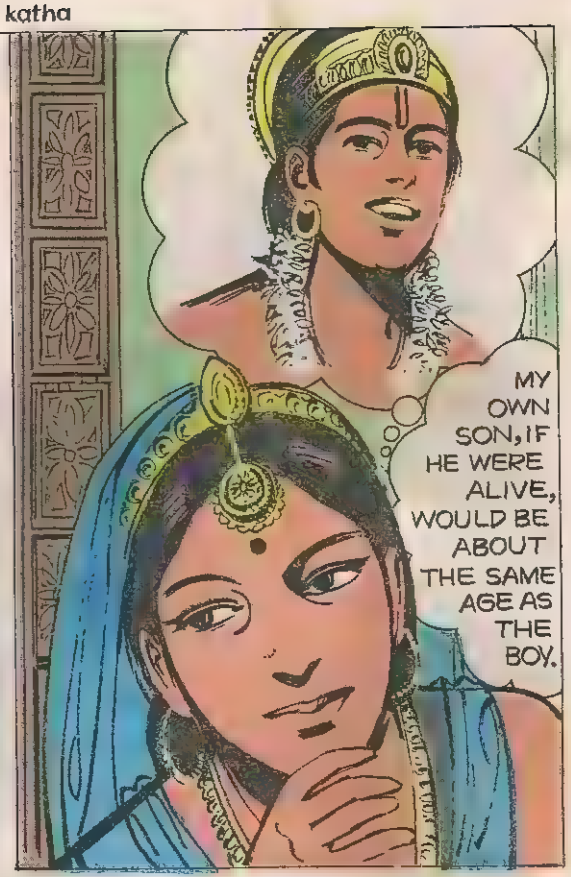
THE CEREMONY WAS HARDLY OVER WHEN THE GODS CAME TO HIM.
WE BEG OF YOU TO RESTORE KAMA TO RATI.

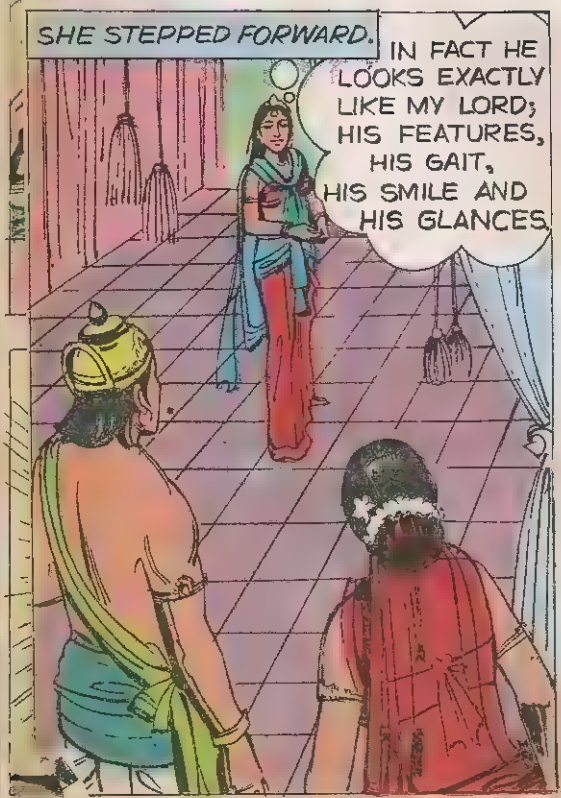
KAMA SHALL CERTAINLY BE RESTORED TO RATI. I TOO AM NOW HIS SLAVE.

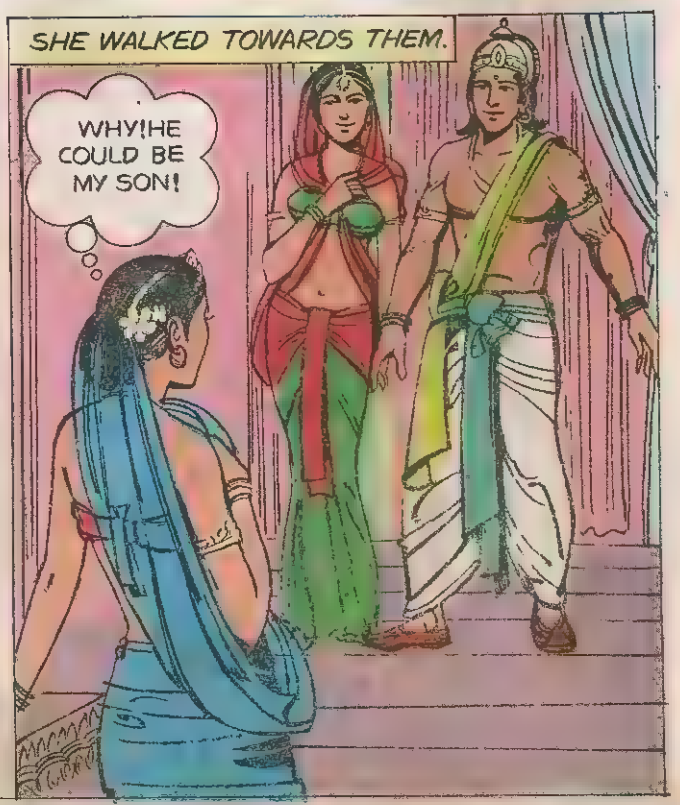

AT THAT MOMENT IN DWARAKA, PRADYUMNA AND MAYAVATI ENTERED THE INNER APARTMENTS OF KRISHNA'S PALACE.

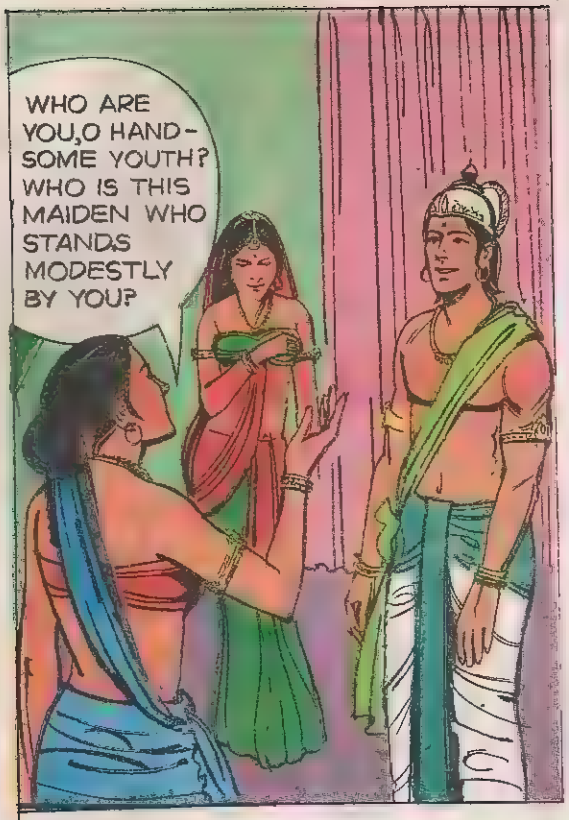
THE LADIES MISTOOK HIM TO BE KRISHNA.
THE LORD HAS COME!
WHO IS THE BEAUTIFUL LADY WITH HIM?

RUKMINI, WHO KNEW IT WAS NOT KRISHNA, WAS PERPLEXED.
WHO COULD THIS COUPLE BE?


MY OWN SON, IF HE WERE ALIVE, WOULD BE ABOUT THE SAME AGE AS THE BOY.


SHE STEPPED FORWARD.
IN FACT HE LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE MY LORD; HIS FEATURES, HIS GAIT, HIS SMILE AND HIS GLANCES.

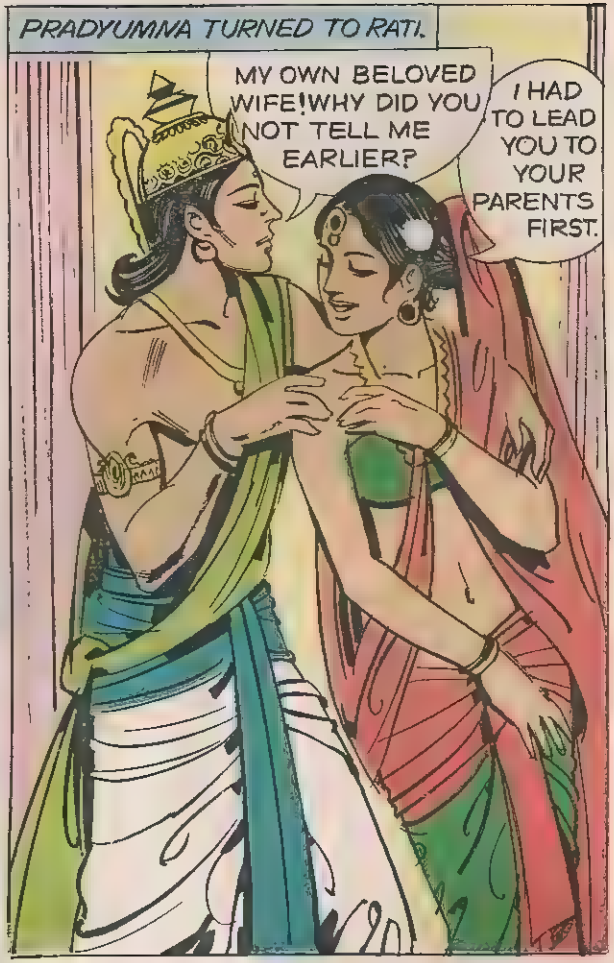

SHE WALKED TOWARDS THEM.
WHY! HE COULD BE MY SON!

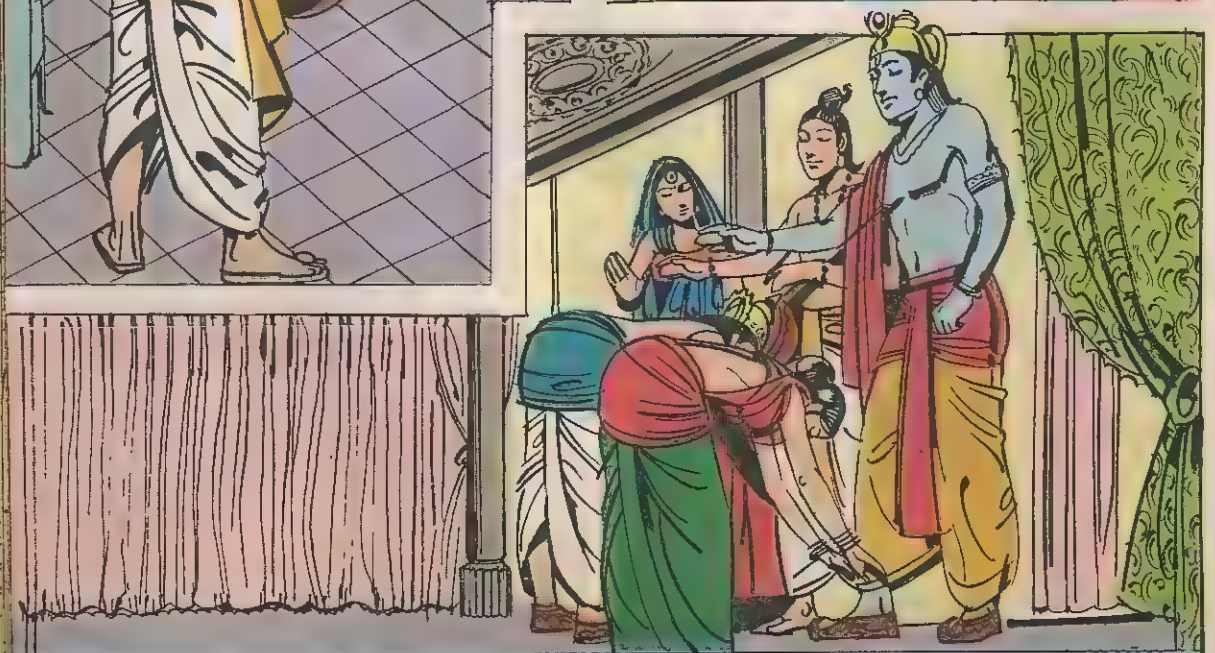

WHO ARE YOU,O HANDSOME YOUTH? WHO IS THIS MAIDEN WHO STANDS MODESTLY BY YOU?

WHEN PRADYUMNA WAS ABOUT TO REPLY, KRISHNA AND NARADA ENTERED THE ROOM.
I SHALL ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

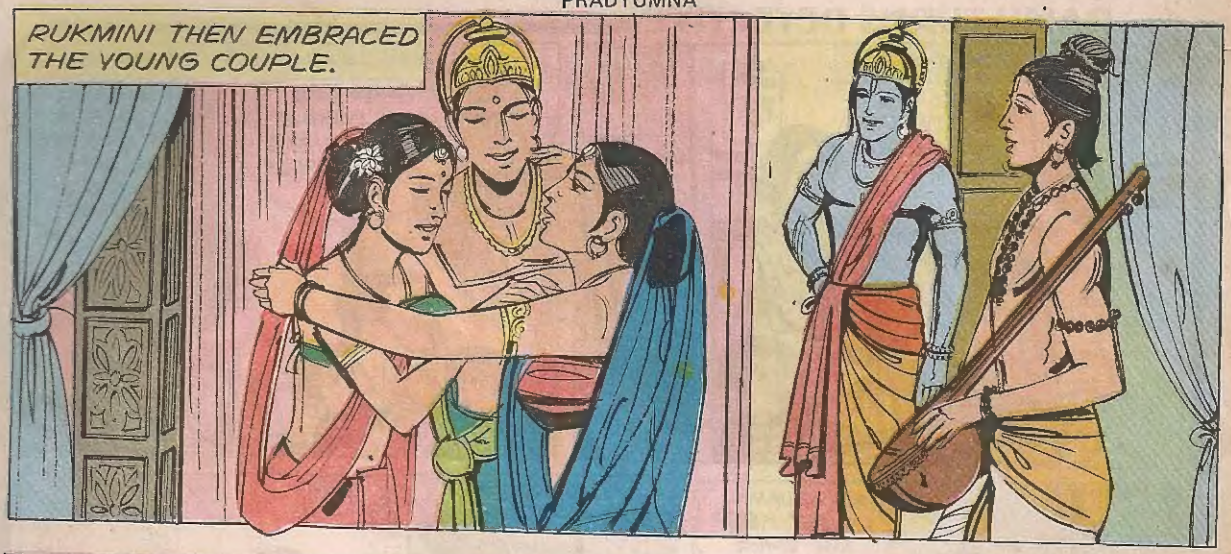
REJOICE, RUKMINI. YOUR LONG-LOST SON HAS RETURNED TO YOU.

THIS IS PRADYUMNA, WHO IS KAMA REBORN.HE WAS DESTINED TO KILL SHAMBARA AND MEET THE DEVOUT RATI IN THIS BIRTH.



RATI AND PRADYUMNA THEN FELL AT THE FEET OF NARADA, KRISHNA AND RUKMINI.


RUKMINI THEN EMBRACED THE YOUNG COUPLE.

THE CITY OF DWARAKA RESOUNDED WITH EXCLAMATIONS OF JOY WHEN THE CITIZENS HEARD THAT THE LONG-LOST PRADYUMNA HAD RETURNED WITH A WIFE.
OUR PRINCE HAS RETURNED AS IF FROM THE DEAD.
AND THE STEADFAST RATI IS HIS QUEEN.
TODAY IS INDEED A FORTUNATE DAY FOR DWARAKA.

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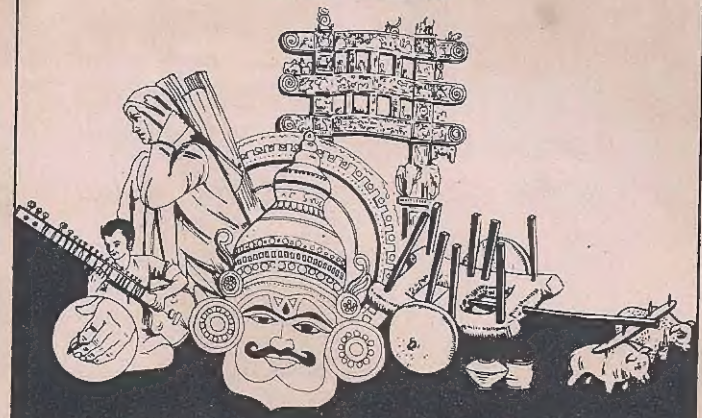

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